

# Beyond Jamestown: Virginia Indians Today and Yesterday



Virginia Indian Canoe Dance (at the “Big Day Out” Festival in Kent County, England, July 2006)

**Edited by Melanie R. Brimhall, Carole Nash and Karenne Wood**

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

vfh

Powhatan Red Cloud Owen, a member of the Chickahominy tribe and a Jamestown events planner, remembers being dressed in regalia for the opening ceremonies in 2004 at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington. A Kiowa man standing next to him turned and asked where he was from.

"Virginia," Powhatan remembers answering.

"No, where are your people from?" the questioner persisted.

"Virginia," Powhatan repeated. "We're the Chickahominy."

"Never heard of them," responded the Kiowa.

Powhatan replied, "Well, we're here. We never left."



The Virginia Indians of our history books, until recently, were forgotten, invisible peoples. The descendants of Virginia's founding fathers-- Powhatan, Amoroleck, Opechancanough and others--were denied their identities when legal documents were altered by state bureaucrats, and oral history fell silent. Today, the eight state-recognized tribes of Virginia (Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Monacan, Nansemond, Pamunkey, Rappahannock, and Upper Mattaponi) anticipate the final vote that will acknowledge their long-awaited federal recognition.

The first edition of "Beyond Jamestown: Virginia Indians Past and Present," was designed to accompany an exhibit at James Madison University. Developed by Karenne Wood for the Virginia Museum of Natural History, the exhibit presents Virginia Indian history from a Virginia Indian perspective and travels throughout the state.

This second edition was developed to respond to sweeping revisions in Virginia Indian content across grade levels in the Virginia Standards of Learning in Social Sciences. We thank Betsy Barton, Virginia Department of Education, for her unwavering enthusiasm and technical support.

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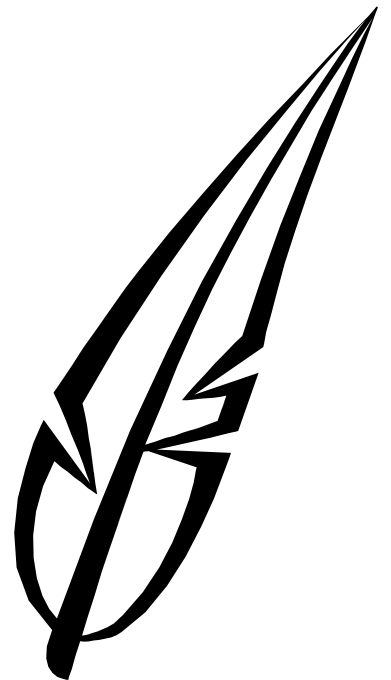
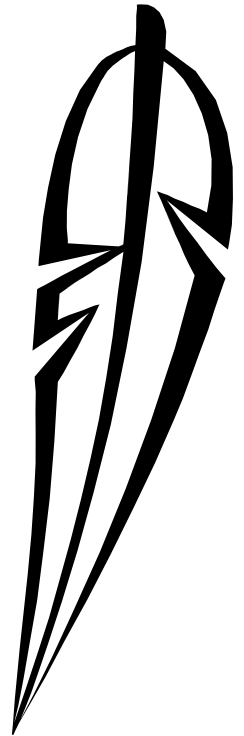
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*Moria Oden (Monacan)*



# Virginia Tribes Today



Left: Monacan powwow Grand Entry: Daniel Red Elk Gear, John L. Johns. Center: Current Virginia Chiefs. Back row, L-R: Kenneth Adams (Upper Mattaponi), Barry Bass (Nansemond), Gene Adkins (E. Chickahominy). Front, L-R: Kenneth Branham (Monacan), Anne Richardson (Rappahannock), Stephen Adkins (Chickahominy). Right: Chief Stephen Adkins.

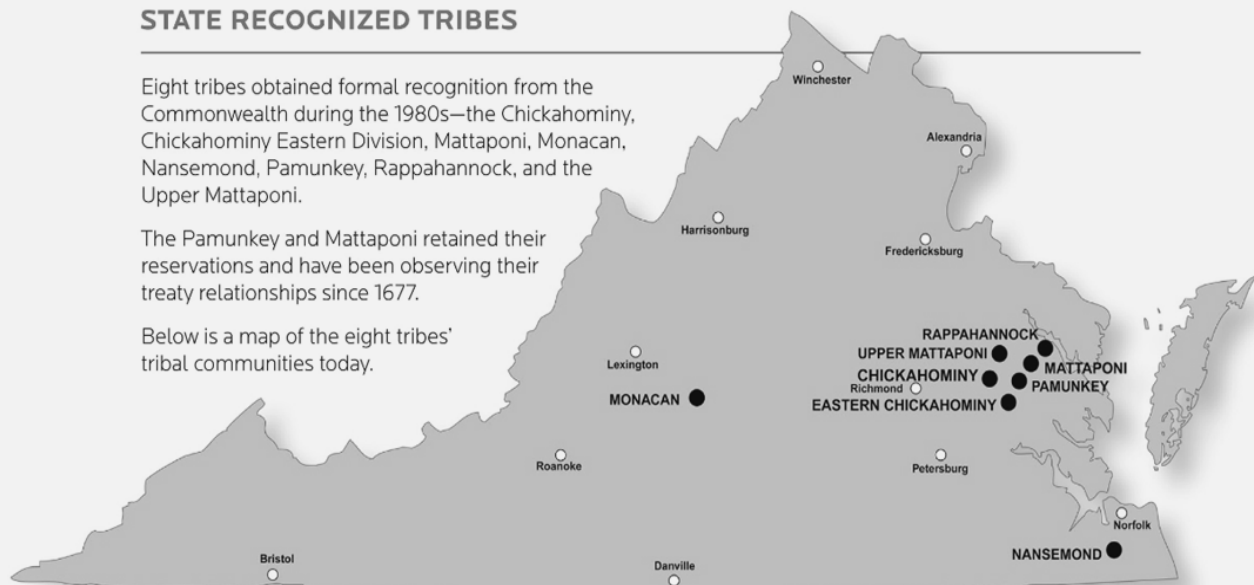
If you ask Virginia Indians how long we've been here, they will probably say, "We have always been here." Our histories, our ancestral connections, and our traditions are intertwined with the land called *Tsenacomoco* by the Powhatan peoples. It is a bountiful land, given to us by the Creator as the place most fitting for us to live.

## STATE RECOGNIZED TRIBES

Eight tribes obtained formal recognition from the Commonwealth during the 1980s—the Chickahominy, Chickahominy Eastern Division, Mattaponi, Monacan, Nansemond, Pamunkey, Rappahannock, and the Upper Mattaponi.

The Pamunkey and Mattaponi retained their reservations and have been observing their treaty relationships since 1677.

Below is a map of the eight tribes' tribal communities today.



# Virginia Indians and the Standards of Learning: Approaching the Past with New Vision

According to archaeologists, Native people have lived in the area we now call Virginia for as many as 18,000 years. New discoveries at Cactus Hill, a site in Sussex County, have called into question the long-held theory that the first peoples of the Americas arrived ten to twelve thousand years ago via the Bering Straits, crossing a land bridge over frozen tundra as they pursued large game such as mastodon. Scientists no longer agree about when and how people came to live here. Many believe that a series of migrations took place over perhaps as much as 50,000 years, both by boat and by land. Many Native people believe that we have always been here.

The early inhabitants of Virginia were hunter-gatherers who followed migratory routes of game animals such as caribou and elk, which populated this region in an earlier, colder era. Over time, the people settled into specific regions along the riverbanks and created distinct social patterns and traditions. Our ancestors developed intimate, balanced relationships with the animals, plants, and geographic formations that characterized their homelands. History books have seldom referred to the sophisticated agricultural techniques Native people practiced for more than 900 years or to the cultural landscapes we developed, where hunting and fishing areas alternated with townships and croplands arranged along waterways. They have seldom noted that Native nutrition was far superior to what was available in Europe before the colonial era, or that our knowledge of astronomy informed our farming calendars as well as navigation by night. Virginia was not a wilderness to us; it was a known and loved home place, a managed environment, and we shared our resources with strangers as well as among our own people. That is the Native way.

For hundreds of years, American Indian elders have lamented descriptions of our people in books and in popular culture, along with the persistent myths and stereotypes that surround public perceptions of our history. Almost every kindergartner knows Disney's version of the Pocahontas legend, but few high school graduates know the names of Virginia's tribes nor that they remain in our Commonwealth as productive citizens who "walk in two worlds," as we say. The 2008 revisions to the Virginia Standards of Learning in Social Sciences will go a long way toward correcting such misperceptions. For the first time, a group of Virginia Indians contributed significant content suggestions to the Standards and the curriculum framework. The result is a series of Standards that reflect Native perspectives.

Today's Virginia students will learn in kindergarten about the importance of Powhatan as well as Pocahontas. They will encounter, in SOL 2.2, the three cultures of Powhatan, Pueblo and Lakota, with an emphasis on communities both past and present., and they will learn that American Indian people relate to their environments in different ways, reflecting human ingenuity. In 3.3, they will study the explorations of well-known figures such as Newport and will learn about the effects of those discoveries not only for Europeans but for the American Indian peoples who called those lands home.

Virginia Studies students will encounter more information about languages and cultural groups, important archaeological discoveries, the contributions of Powhatan to the settlers' survival, and interactions between the three cultural groups that came to share Virginia's Coastal Plain; the Algonquian, Siouan, and Iroquoian language speakers. They will identify the state-recognized Virginia tribes and learn their locations.

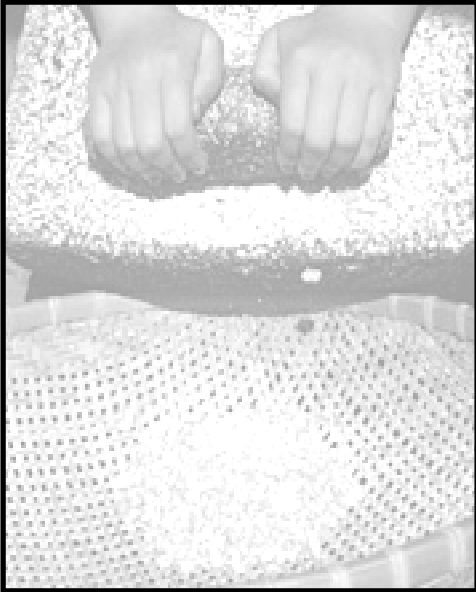
As you study this guide, we hope that the voices of Virginia's first people will resonate across years of silence and invisibility. Our story of survival can create new understandings, as part of the American story.

Karenne Wood (Monacan)

Director, Virginia Indian Heritage Program, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities



# Chickahominy



The Chickahominy Tribe is located in Charles City County, Virginia, midway between Richmond and Williamsburg, near where the tribe lived in 1600. When Jamestown was founded, the tribe lived in established towns along the Chickahominy River, from the mouth of the river near Jamestown to the middle of the current county of New Kent. Because of their proximity to Jamestown, the Chickahominy people had early contact with the English settlers, helping them to survive during their first few winters here by trading food for other items. Later, the tribal members helped teach the settlers how to grow and preserve their own food. Captain John Smith made several trade voyages up the Chickahominy River to the land of the Chickahominy.

As the settlers began to prosper and expand their settlements, the Chickahominy were crowded out of their homeland. In the treaty of 1646, the tribe was granted reservation land in the Pamunkey Neck area of Virginia, near where the Mattaponi reservation now exists in King William County. Eventually, the tribe lost its reservation land, and the tribal families began a gradual migration to the area called the Chickahominy Ridge, where they now reside.

At the time of the English colonists' arrival, the tribe was led by a council of elders and religious leaders called the mungai or "great men," rather than by a single person. Today, it is led by a tribal council consisting of twelve men and women, including a chief and two assistant chiefs, all elected by vote of the members of the tribe.

There are approximately 875 Chickahominy people living within a five-mile radius of the tribal center, with several hundred others living in other parts of the United States. The Chickahominy Tribe was granted official recognition by the state of Virginia in 1983 and since 1996 has been working hard towards recognition by the federal government.

***"People need to understand who we are today, and the struggles we've had to go through just to remain who we are, just to live our culture. We're part of mainstream America, but we still have to live in two worlds."***

**-Chief Stephen Adkins**

# Eastern Chickahominy

The Chickahominy Tribe Eastern Division is located 25 miles east of Richmond in New Kent County, Virginia. European contact with the tribal ancestry of the modern-day Chickahominy Indians and the Chickahominy Indian Tribe Eastern Division is recorded as early as 1607. They shared a history until the early 1900s, when it was decided by the Eastern Chickahominy to organize their own tribal government. This was done because of travel inconvenience to tribal meetings of the Chickahominy in Charles City County.

In 1910, a school was started in New Kent County for the Chickahominy Tribe Eastern Division. Grades 1 through 8 were taught in this one-room school. In 1920-21, the tribe was formally organized as a separate tribal government, with E.P. Bradby as the Chief. In September 1922, Tsena Commocko Indian Baptist Church was organized. Church services were held in the school building until a church could be built. In 1925, a certificate of incorporation was issued to the Chickahominy Tribe Eastern Division.

The tribe is proud of its 26 veterans with service in the Armed Forces since World War I. Today the people of the tribe enjoy employment in the private sector, working in the areas of technology, nursing, business administration, and privately owned businesses.

Tribal members plan to build a tribal center and museum, where functions can be held in an environment of fellowship and interaction with those who come from out of state. The hope to enrich and educate our people and the people of Virginia is a strong drive to move forward.

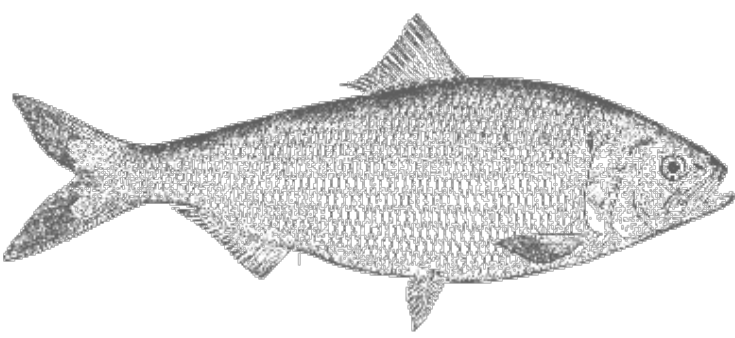
***"We're still here, and we are not going away! We still have a long way to go, and I hope that the Virginia Indians who follow us will be driven to work to improve things."***

***- Chief Gene Adkins***

**The tribe purchased 41 acres of land in 2002, becoming one of the last of the eight state-recognized tribes in Virginia to re-acquire land.**







## Mattaponi

**Shad have always been a staple in the Mattaponi diet and at the center of the Mattaponi culture.**

**The Hatchery and Marine Science Facility were funded through grants from a number of foundations and organizations as well as from individual contributions.**

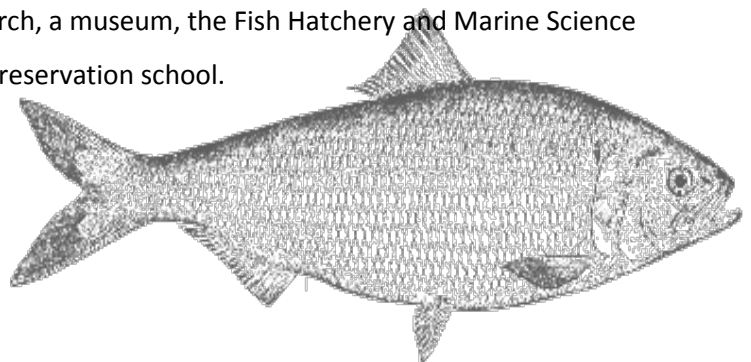
**The facility supports the tribe's traditional work with American shad and began several programs that include fish tagging, water quality monitoring, and the development of educational materials for schools and communities about protecting water resources.**

The members of this tribe live on a reservation that stretches along the borders of the Mattaponi River in King William County. The Mattaponi Indian Reservation dates back to 1658. In those early days, the people made their living completely from nature's resources. In 1646 the Mattaponi began paying tribute to an early Virginia governor. This practice continues to the present day, when on the fourth Wednesday of November the tribe presents game or fish to the governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Mattaponi Indian Reservation was created from land long held by the tribe by an act of the Virginia General Assembly in 1658. Being one of the oldest reservations in the country, the tribe traces its history back to the paramount chief Powhatan who led most of Tidewater Virginia when Europeans arrived in 1607. Since the Assembly's affirmation of the reservation in 1658, the Mattaponi Tribe has maintained its heritage and many of its customs despite pressures pushing toward assimilation with mainstream culture.

Through the years, both the reservation's physical size and the number of tribal members have diminished. The reservation presently encompasses approximately 150 acres, a portion of which is wetland. Although the Tribal Roll numbers 450 people, only 75 actually live on the reservation. The Mattaponi Indian Tribe is state recognized and continues to maintain its own sovereign government. The governing body today is made up of the chief, assistant chief, and seven councilmen. The mission of the Mattaponi people is to maintain a sustainable community on the Mattaponi River, a

tributary of the Chesapeake Bay, that will extend the thousands of years of Mattaponi history and heritage and, in doing so, demonstrate to all people how they may live successful and rewarding lives in harmony with the earth. The reservation today sits on the banks of the Mattaponi River, one of the most pristine rivers in the Eastern United States. Facilities on the reservation include living quarters, a small church, a museum, the Fish Hatchery and Marine Science Facility, and a community tribal building that was formerly the reservation school.



# Monacan

The Monacan Indian Nation is composed of about 1,700 tribal members, located in Amherst County and recognized as a tribe by the Commonwealth of Virginia on February 14, 1989. Native occupation in this region dates back more than 12,000 years, and the original territory of the tribe comprised more than half of the state of Virginia, including almost all of the piedmont region and parts of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Monacan Nation is one of the oldest groups of indigenous peoples still existing in their ancestral homeland, and the only group of Eastern Siouan people in the state.

Traditionally, Monacan people buried the remains of their dead in sacred earthen mounds constructed over time. Thirteen such mounds have been found throughout the Blue Ridge and piedmont regions, similarly constructed, some more than a thousand years old. Thomas Jefferson observed several Indians visiting one of the mounds on his property in the 1700s. He later excavated the mound and became known as “the father of American archaeology” because he documented the findings.

St. Paul's Episcopal Mission at Bear Mountain is the site of the tribe's ancestral museum and cultural center. The Episcopal Diocese returned the land on which the tribal center sits to the Monacan Nation in 1995, ending nearly a century of church control over this small tract held sacred by Monacan people. Since that time, the tribe has purchased more than 100 acres on Bear Mountain and has obtained other parcels of land in the same area. Tribal members have begun a cultural education program, an elders' program, and a tribal scholarship fund. They have obtained numerous grants to fund their projects and have restored their log cabin schoolhouse, circa 1870, which is now a registered National Historic Landmark.

## On preserving tribal traditions...

Chief Kenneth Branham says he asked his grandmother why the Indian culture wasn't passed on. She explained that in earlier days, it was safer to keep it a secret.

*"She told me with tears in her eyes if the wrong person heard her talking or teaching us those ways, she might not have a place to live the next day."*

After getting his grandmother's blessing, he helped change that.

*"I'm very proud of what you're doing," she said, through tears.*

*"Once she told me that, I knew we were doing the right thing. There was no turning back. You know, I couldn't stop after that if I wanted to."*

- Chief Kenneth Branham



## Nansemond

At the time of their first English contact in Virginia, the Nansemond Tribe lived in several towns along the Nansemond River centered near Chuckatuck, the current location of Suffolk. Their head chief lived near Dumpling Island, where the tribe's temples and sacred items were located. At that time, the tribe had a population of 1200 persons with 300 bowmen.

The arriving English raided the Nansemond town in 1608, burning their houses and destroying their canoes in order to force them to give up their corn, thus beginning the open hostilities between the two communities. As increasing numbers of Europeans poured into the Nansemond River area, the tribal members had to relocate their tribal lands and their reservation on several occasions, losing their last known reservation lands in 1792.

Currently most Nansemond tribal members still live in the Suffolk/Chesapeake area. The tribe holds its monthly meetings at the Indiana United Methodist Church, which was founded in 1850 as a mission for the Nansemond, and which is adjacent to the site of earlier tribal schools. The tribe was state recognized in 1985. The members have operated a tribal museum and gift shop in Chuckatuck, and they have current plans for a tribal center and museum and living history area on ancestral lands along the Nansemond River. They co-host a powwow each June with the city of Chesapeake, and they celebrate their tribal Powwow each August.

***“Native American culture and spirituality involve a sincere environmental respect and reverence for land, with the belief that gifts from the Creator emerge from and are returned to the earth. Because they feel that the land ‘owns’ them, Native Americans are spiritually drawn to the land of their ancestors. For the Nansemond, there is a spiritual connection to the land at Lone Star Lakes Park. My ancestors lived, hunted, fished, married, gave birth, raised families, carried out daily activities, advanced in leadership rank, grew old, and eventually died in, on or around that specific piece of land.”***

**- Chief Barry Bass**

# Pamunkey

The history of the Pamunkey Tribe has been recorded by archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians, and dates back 10,000 to 12,000 years. Listed as one of the six or more districts inherited by Chief Powhatan, evidence indicates that the Pamunkey district itself was the center among those core districts, and the Pamunkey people were considered to be the most powerful of all the groups within the Powhatan Confederacy. The Pamunkey lands have been historically established as a place where Powhatan's leaders gathered to rest and restore their spirits. After Powhatan's death in 1618, Pamunkey Indian tradition accords that he was buried in a mound on the reservation.

The Pamunkey Indian Reservation, on the Pamunkey River and adjacent to King William County, Virginia, contains approximately 1,200 acres of land, 500 acres of which is wetlands with numerous creeks. Thirty-four families reside on the reservation and many tribal members live in nearby Richmond, Newport News, other parts of Virginia and all over the United States. The tribe has maintained its own continuing governing body, consisting of a chief and seven council members elected every four years. The Chief and Council perform all tribal governmental functions as set forth by their laws.



Much of the surviving Pamunkey culture is indebted to a subsistence lifestyle centered around pottery making, fishing, hunting, and trapping. Fishing, especially shad and herring, are an integral part of the tribe's economy. Because of the tribe's foresight, the Pamunkey River shad runs have remained healthiest of any of the East Coast rivers that are tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay.

**Pamunkey elections are held every four years, in the traditional manner, using peas and corn kernels. A basket is passed around on election night with the same number of peas and corn kernels as voters. The chief is the first to be voted on, and then the seven councilmen. Each person is given a pea and a corn to vote when the basket is passed for a candidate. A corn represents a "yes" vote for the candidate, and a pea is a "no" vote. The peas and corn kernels are counted for each person, and the person with the most corn is elected.**

*"I think most people, when they think about the history of Virginia and the Indians in particular. . . think about these things like dinosaurs that existed and died, and now we're writing about them and learning about them. But that's not the case with the tribes. They have vibrant communities that have been preserved for thousands of years."*

-Chief Anne Richardson

## Rappahannock

The Rappahannock probably first encountered the English in 1603.

It was likely Captain Samuel Mace who sailed up the Rappahannock River and was befriended by the Rappahannock chief. The record tells us that the ship's captain killed the chief and took a group of

Rappahannock men back to England. In December 1603, those men

were documented giving dugout demonstrations on the Thames River. In December 1607, the Rappahannock people first met Captain John Smith at their capital town Topahanocke, on the banks of the river bearing their name. At the time, Smith was a prisoner of Powhatan's war chief, Opechancanough, who took Smith to the Rappahannock town for the people to determine whether Smith was the Englishman who, four years earlier, had murdered their chief and kidnapped some of their people. Smith was found innocent of these crimes, at least, and he returned to the Rappahannock homeland in the summer of 1608, when he mapped 14 Rappahannock towns on

**English settlement in the Rappahannock River valley began illegally in the 1640s. After Bacon's Rebellion, the Rappahannock consolidated into one town, and in November 1682 the Virginia Council laid out 3,474 acres for the Rappahannock in Indian Neck, where their descendants live today. One year later, the Virginia colony forcibly removed the tribal members from their homes and relocated them, to be used as a human shield to protect white Virginians from the Iroquois of New York, who continued to attack the Virginia frontier and to threaten the expansion of English settlement.**

the north side of the river.

In an effort to solidify their tribal government in order to fight for their state recognition, the Rappahannock incorporated in 1921. The tribe was officially recognized as one of the historic tribes of the Commonwealth of Virginia by an act of the General Assembly on March 25, 1983. In 1996 the Rappahannock reactivated work on federal acknowledgment, which had begun in 1921, when Chief George Nelson petitioned the U.S. Congress to recognize Rappahannock civil and sovereign rights. In 1998 the tribe elected the first woman chief, G. Anne Richardson, to lead a tribe in Virginia since the 1700s. As a fourth-generation chief in her family, she brings to the position a long legacy of traditional leadership and service among her people.





# Upper Mattaponi

For centuries the ancestors of the Upper Mattaponi people lived in towns along the waterways of Virginia. They harvested corn, beans, and squash and hunted deer. They spoke an Algonquian language, and when the British came in 1607 they were prosperous members of the Powhatan paramount chiefdom. Captain John Smith's map of 1612 indicates that the tribe's present location corresponds with an Indian town called Passaunkack.

In the mid-1600s, the upper reaches of the Mattaponi River were still frontier, and other tribes had been forced into the area by the expansion of the British. A 1673 map drawn by August Hermann notes the largest concentration of Indians near Passaunkack, home of the Upper Mattaponi. The Peace Treaty of 1677 was signed on behalf of the Mattaponi by the *werowansqua* Cockacoeske, and a reservation of Chickahominy and Mattaponi was established near Passaunkack. During the 1700s, the Chickahominy moved back to their homeland. Those people who remained were the ancestors of the Upper Mattaponi.

Through the 18th and 19th centuries, the Upper Mattaponi were known as the Adamstown Band, because so many of the tribal citizens had the last name Adams. By 1850 a nucleus of at least 10 Adamstown families were documented in the area, farming and hunting. A Civil War map of 1863 designated the area as Indian Land, and by the 1880s the Adamstown Band had built its own school. Because of the racial climate, Indian people had few rights and found it difficult to prosper. Even so, they valued an education, and the first federal funds were requested in 1892 for education of the Adamstown Indians. In the early 20th century, a cultural revival spread throughout the tribes of the region, and the band changed its name to the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe.

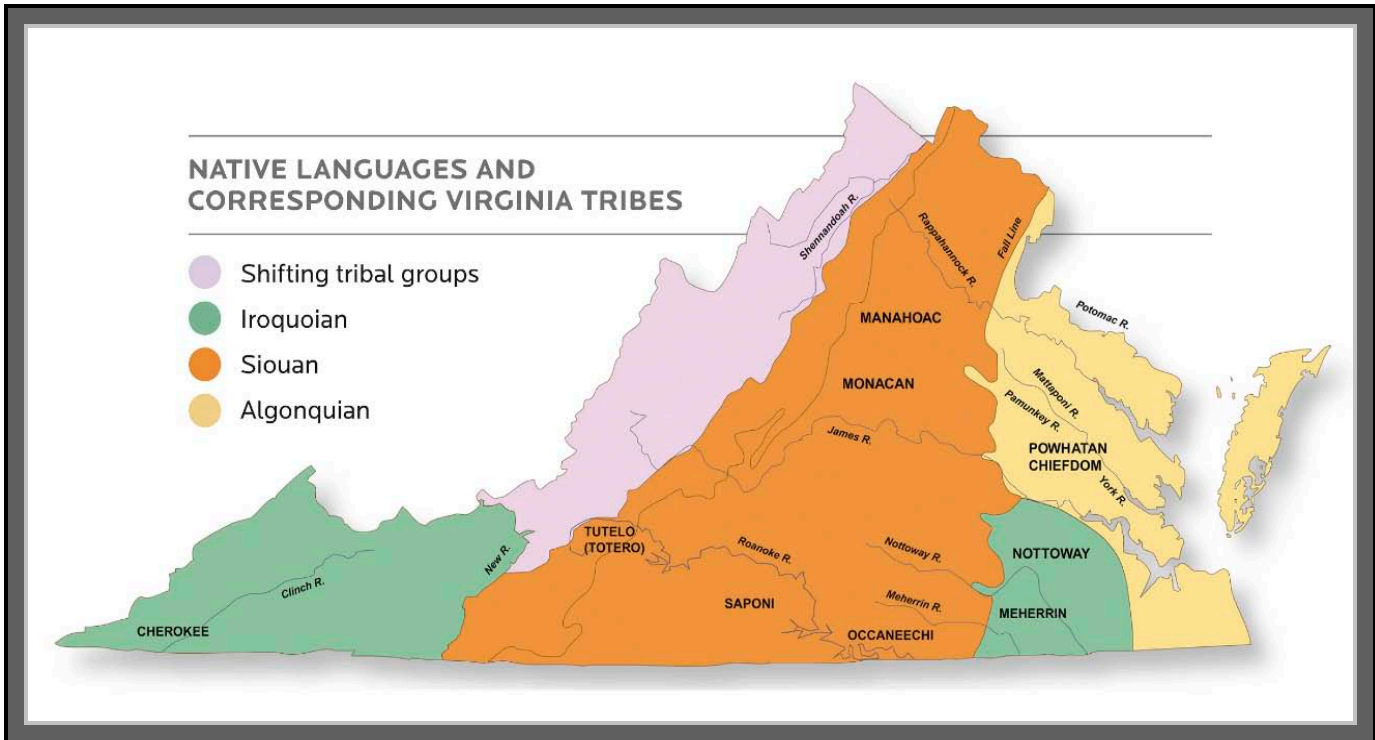
**In 1919 the tribe built a small one-room schoolhouse, Sharon Indian School. This building served them until 1952, when a brick structure was erected adjacent to the original building. The new school was closed in 1965 with the policy of desegregation, and it is now on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Buildings. It is the only public Indian school building still existing in Virginia.**

***"We cannot continue to be the forgotten people in the Virginia history books or on the landmarks across this Commonwealth. Our Creator placed us here as the gatekeepers of this land, and our magnificent story cannot and will not be buried."***

**—Chief Kenneth Adams (Upper Mattaponi)**



# Languages



*Note:* The Shenandoah Valley was occupied by Siouan-speaking people until the 1400s, when enemy tribes from the north drove the inhabitants from their homelands. The Siouan tribes remained in the lower region of the Great Valley until the mid-1700s. During colonial times, the Valley was traveled by many tribes, including the Iroquois, the Delaware, and the Shawnee.

**A language family** is a group of related languages linked by similar-sounding words and grammatical structures. Each Native language family in Virginia (Algonquian, Siouan, and Iroquoian) represented a number of tribes that were related through cultural and familial ties.



**Tuck the Turtle wants to know.....**  
**Can you list some of the words we use**  
**today that came from Virginia Indian languages?**

Here are a few: raccoon, persimmon, moccasin,  
pecan, opossum, tomahawk

# Powhatan



*Powhatan's mantle, Ashmolean Museum, ca. 1608*

Powhatan's tributaries (the tribes that paid tribute to him) are best referred to as a "paramount chiefdom" or by using generic terms such as "the Powhatan tribes."

*SOL: K1(a), VS 3(g)*

John Smith's drawing of Powhatan



When the English arrived in Virginia in 1607, Powhatan, whose informal name was Wahunsunacock, was the acknowledged paramount chief, or *mamanatowick*, of more than 32 tribes, with more than 150 towns. These tribes ranged from the Potomac River in the north to just south of the James River in the south, and from the fall line of the rivers in the west to the Atlantic Ocean.

Powhatan, who was probably in his 60's when he first met the English, had acquired leadership of these tribes through inheritance and coercion that was frequently reinforced with family or marriage ties. He held his position not only through military strength but also through great personal and spiritual charisma as well as a complex system of social rules not fully understood by the English. The tribes under Powhatan's leadership paid tribute to his treasury in food and goods, which were then used for redistribution, trade, rewards, and ceremonial display.

In the early years of the English colony, Powhatan's first intent was probably to incorporate the English into his polity as another tribe. Thwarted by the English, who had another agenda, he retired from leadership around 1616 and died in April 1618.

—Deanna Beacham



## Chief Stephen Adkins (Chickahominy)

I was born in my childhood home in Charles City County, Virginia. My siblings and I went to church and school, normal activities for most children. However, as teenagers, many of us had to leave home in order to attend high school in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Virginia embraced the Racial Integrity Act, which labeled all people as either white or colored. We were the third race in a two-race state. Through many of our school years, our preprinted report cards had two options to check for race. One option was white the other was colored. Of course, "Indian" was a write-in. We finally moved up on the forms with the pre-printed option, "other." Our underground joke, albeit painful, was "What tribe are you? The answer was "other."

***"I remember once traveling with my father, and we pulled into a gas station because I had to go to the bathroom, and there was one bathroom marked "white" and one marked "colored."***

***I said, "Dad, what do I do?"***

***-Chief Stephen Adkins***

Each year our families would make the homecoming circuit, visiting all of the Native American Baptist churches as they kicked off a week of revival. While also serving as the social hub of each Indian community, the church was a place of praise and worship where strong moral values and the Christian faith were nurtured. The annual Chickahominy Indian Fall Festival and Pow Wow attracted members from all of the Virginia Indian tribes as well as people from the mainstream society, providing a way for us to share our culture.

For the last several years, my primary focus has been toward federal recognition for my people. I believe soon the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, along with the other Virginia Indian tribes seeking federal recognition, will take their place(s) alongside the other 562 federally recognized tribes in the USA by being formally acknowledged as sovereign nations by the United States government. I want to see Indians receive due classification in a state and

country that has marginalized them for 400 years.

As a leader of my tribe, my main goals are to inspire our young tribal members to seek higher education in order to effectively compete for meaningful jobs, to be fully engaged citizens in today's society, e.g., voting and running for public office, to be morally upright, and to be spiritually grounded with a deep faith in our Creator. For the future, I would like to see my people continue to help guide and shape the emerging generation into principle driven people of character and courage who will bring honor to their heritage.





# Pocahontas

Pocahontas, a daughter of the Paramount chief Powhatan, was about 10 years old in 1607, when the captive John Smith was brought to her father's headquarters at Werowocomoco. She was noted for being bright and curious. Opinions differ as to whether the famous "rescue

of John Smith" incident actually happened, but if it did, it was most likely a form of ritual misunderstanding by Smith.

During the next two years, Pocahontas sometimes accompanied her father's councilors on trips to Jamestown.



In 1613, while she was visiting with the Patowomeke people in what is now Stafford County, the teenager was kidnapped by the English and held for ransom. During her captivity, Pocahontas met the Englishman John Rolfe, who wanted to marry her. After the English made peace with her father, she agreed, with her father's approval, to accept their religion and marry Rolfe. She took the name Rebecca. The peace that followed lasted for several years, during which the English steadily added to their land holdings from her people's territory.

In 1616, the Rolfes went to England with their young son Thomas, where Rebecca Rolfe was presented to the English court. She died there of an unknown disease in 1617, and she was buried in Gravesend. In 2006, a delegation of Virginia Indians visited her grave and honored her as one of our ancestors who faced difficult decisions and did her best for her people.

**Tuck the Turtle wants to know.....**

**Was Pocahontas a Princess???**



Answer: No. Because inheritance passed from the mother, she could not inherit her father's paramount chieftom. English people confused their own ideas about royalty with American Indian leadership styles.

SOL: K1(a), VS 3(g)

## Ashley Atkins (Pamunkey)



I grew up just like every other child. I went to public school in Chesterfield County. I always really liked school; I enjoyed learning especially about history which is something that has definitely stuck with me. I think enjoying school helped me in becoming an honor roll student. My favorite school activities were the ones related to music. In middle school, I was a trombone player in the school band as well as a singer in the school choir. I was a member of six different choirs throughout high school and I also participated in multiple high school drama productions.

One of the fun things I experienced growing up was spending summers and holidays on the Pamunkey Indian Reservation. My grandparents and great-grandparents lived on the rez (reservation) when I was growing up and my brother and I and our cousins would go there often to visit family. We would go swimming in the Pamunkey River, ride bikes, and go fishing which was one of my favorite things. Some of the foods that I ate, such as wild turkey, deer, fish and eel, may be different than what most children eat. One of my favorite childhood experiences, that I still enjoy today, is going to powwows to see family and friends perform.

Music was my initial focus when I began college at James Madison University. However, archaeology and history have always been a part of my life and this was the path I knew I needed to follow. Currently, I am a graduate student at the College of William and Mary studying anthropology and archaeology. One of the reasons I specifically chose to focus on archaeology is the lack of Virginia Indian involvement in archaeology which in turn creates an absence of the Virginia Indian perspective in the portrayal of their past and history. I want to be an advocate for the inclusion of Native Americans in indigenous archaeology. Currently, the tribes of Virginia are only recognized by the state of Virginia and not the United States of America. The Virginia tribes have been trying for years to obtain federal recognition and have been unsuccessful.



***“One hope and dream that I have is that the federal government will give the Virginia tribes the recognition they deserve.”***

**-- Ashley Atkins**

# Christopher Newport



Christopher Newport was an English sailor who served as the captain of the *Susan Constant*, the largest of the three ships that carried colonists to the Powhatan tribes' homeland. In December 1606, the group of 104 men and boys set sail from London, and after 144 days they reached the edge of the Chesapeake Bay. Then they sailed upriver to an island they called "Jamestown," where John Smith was proclaimed president of the group.

Newport made two more trips from England in the next 18 months, bringing supplies to the starving colonists. He authorized expeditions into the interior of Virginia and was among the first Europeans to venture west to the Fall Line. His last trip shipwrecked in the Bahamas, which later became an English colony.

The English brought their tools, their livestock, and their ways to North America. To them, it was a wild "New World" full of resources they wanted: minerals, timber, and most of all, land. To the Indian peoples who lived there, it was a beautiful homeland that they knew well and loved.

The European newcomers also brought diseases unknown to the Indian communities, which caused terrible epidemics in which many Indians died.

The longest-lasting effect of Newport's explorations is that the Virginia Indians, along with many others, lost their homelands to the settlers. At first only a few settlers established homes around Jamestown, but as time went on, more and more settlers came. They killed the deer on which tribes depended, fenced lands for their livestock, and made laws to punish Indians who trespassed. Many Indian people left their homes, moving west to escape and joining other tribes. Many others died from disease and wars. The survivors changed their ways of life, and adjusted over time to the English presence, but their lives would never be the same.

SOL: 3.3



## Community Life: Roles of Men and Women

In the past, daily tasks among the Powhatan were divided by gender. Men spent most of their time hunting, fishing, making war, and protecting their towns. When they were home, they had to mend fishing nets, construct fish *weirs* (traps), sharpen blades, construct bows and arrows, whittle fish hooks from bones, carve dugout canoes, help to clear new fields for planting, tan hides, and keep a watchful eye over the town in case of enemy attack. Most of the time, men were out hunting. Men proved their worth by becoming accomplished hunters. Before they could marry, they had to demonstrate proficient hunting skills to win the confidence of a potential wife and her family. Venison was the most important meat to the Powhatan, as well as to other Virginia Indian tribes. Deer skins provided clothing, footwear and bedding for their families, especially important in the cold winter months.

In the early 1600s, Europeans brought domesticated animals such as cows, pigs and chickens, which took over the hunting areas. Hunting and fishing became leisurely activities for European men. Because of cultural differences, the colonists believed that Powhatan women were over-burdened, while the men were often idle. However, unlike the European women of the 1600's, Powhatan women (as well as many other Indian tribes) had more freedom to make important decisions, and their opinions were valued by the men. In many tribes the women were in charge of the crops, which meant that they had power over the tribes' food supplies. They were also able to inherit leadership through their family bloodline, enabling some women to become a *weroansqua*, or female chief.

Women were highly respected in Powhatan society. Some were clan mothers, women whose advice was sought before moving the community or going to war. The Powhatan women were skilled in a variety of tasks that made them invaluable to their families and to their husbands. As young women, they learned from their mothers how to make baskets, rope, pottery, wooden utensils, plates and grinding stones. They were taught how and when to plant the gardens. The women constructed the houses and supervised family life. When the town was moved to a new location, the women carried the family's possessions so that the men could shoot game or protect them from attack.

**Because of cultural misunderstanding, the colonists believed that Powhatan women were over-burdened, while the men were often idle. But in Powhatan societies, women had decision-making powers and could become chiefs.**

*SOL: 2.4, USI 3(c)*



# Housing

Although architectural shapes and construction techniques varied, some native tribes on both the east and west coasts built versions of the longhouse. Among the Eastern Woodland tribes, construction began in late spring when the sap level in the tree was high. Green bark allowed for easy cutting, folding and stitching the complex shapes required to make containers, trays, and shields, as well as houses, temples, and work areas.

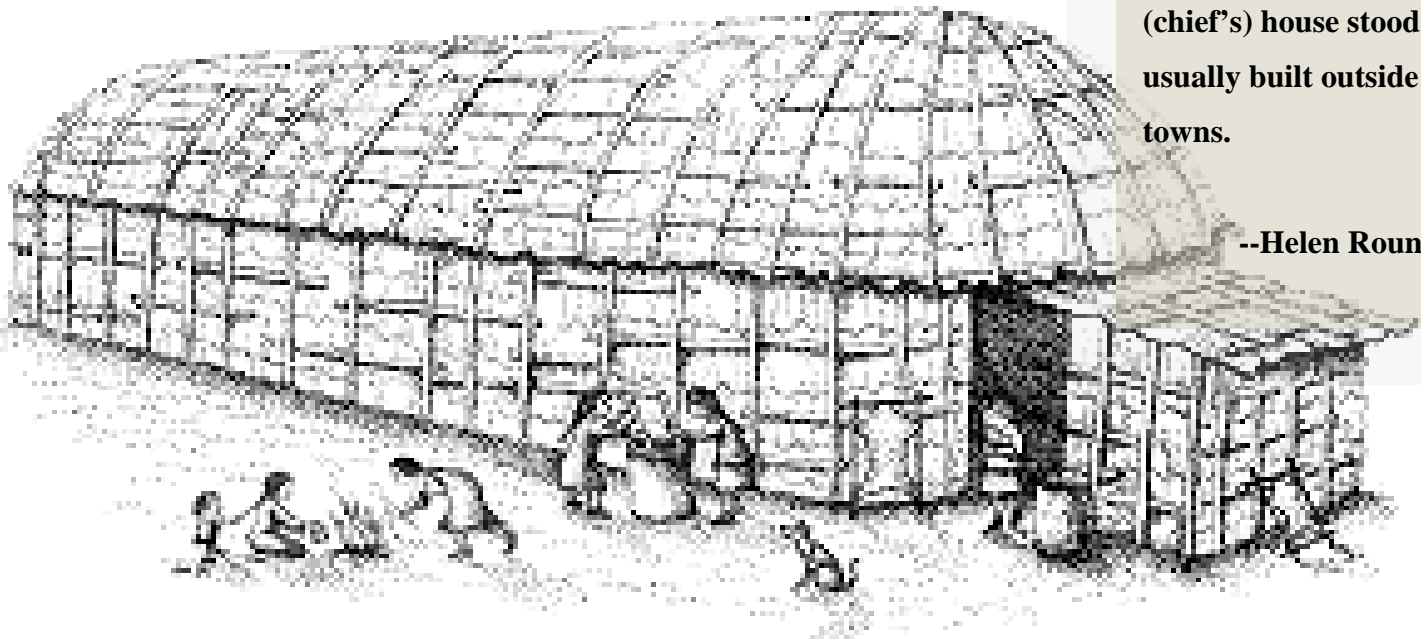
Tall, thin saplings were used to create a barrel-vaulted framework. The common home was covered with woven grass mats; more elite members of the community would use large pieces of bark. For additional insulation in the winter, the mat walls would be double layered. Inside, the homes were comfortably furnished with fur bedding, storage areas, and fire pits with ceiling ventilation. Frequently, several generations would share one longhouse. The Powhatan word for such a house is *yehakin*.

*SOL: 2.2, VS 2(e)*

The Powhatan divided up their territory in a way different from the English. They saw watercourses as centers of districts, not boundaries. Waterways were major sources of food and avenues of transportation, and if a waterway was narrow enough (a mile or less), the people in a tribe would build on both sides of it much the same way that we would build on both sides of our highways.

“Town center” was wherever the *weroance’s* (chief’s) house stood... usually built outside the towns.

--Helen Rountree





## Clothing, Hairstyles and Accessories

Eastern Woodland peoples clothed themselves with deer hides, articles woven from natural fibers, and a variety of animal furs. The type of clothing varied in different seasons, between the genders, and from children to adults. In the summer, men wore a buckskin breechclout (breechcloth) and moccasins. As the weather turned cold, they would add leggings and buckskin or fur mantles (cloaks). The women, who spent most of their time cooking, making pottery, building and repairing houses, taking care of children, and gardening close to home, wore aprons made of buckskin or woven from “silk grass.” When gathering in the forest, river banks and swamps, they wore leggings and moccasins to protect their feet and legs. Children wore clothing only for warmth in the winter months. Colorful and elaborate feather mantles were woven by the women and worn by men and women of high status.

Hairstyles differed between the many cultural groups that inhabited Virginia at the time of contact with Europeans. Some accounts record the women’s’ hair as “long and loose,” while others braided their hair in a single braid with short bangs in the front. Young girls wore very short hair, or possibly shaven on top and braids in the back. Powhatan men believed that their hairstyle--shaven or plucked on the right, long and knotted on the left, with short hair on top called a roach--was required by spiritual forces and obligatory for all “proper” men. The lack of hair on the right side served a practical function; when hunting with a bow and arrow, hair would not catch in the bowstring. On special occasions, some men would decorate the side knot with deer antlers, copper, birds’ wings, rattles from rattlesnakes, or shells that would tinkle as they walked. However, most days, they simply wore long turkey feathers in their hair knot. Although facial hair was minimal, young men were expected to keep their whiskers plucked. Only elders and priests maintained thin beards or mustaches.

Some aspects of adornment, such as bracelets, necklaces, and multiple piercings in the ears and body paint (as seen in the image, next page) were shared by both sexes, while tattooing was mainly practiced by the women. The decorative objects used in the pierced openings varied by individual and included strings of

***“Babies were washed daily in cold water to make them hardy, a practice that both sexes followed throughout life.”***

-Helen Rountree

freshwater pearls, small animal bones, copper, and claws of birds, cougars, bears, raccoons, and squirrels. On occasion, some men would wear small live green and yellow snakes through the holes in their ears.

Social prestige was displayed by wearing necklaces and bracelets of freshwater pearls, shell beads called *roanoke*, and the most precious of all materials, copper. Copper objects were markers of high social standing. The rarest and most valuable shells were the marine *marginella* and other shells from the Gulf Coast that were obtained through a vast network of trade. The quahog clam shell, easily attained in the Tidewater area, was used to manufacture tubular beads known as wampum. Pure copper ore was only available to the Coastal peoples through a trade network that included the Great Lakes. The Monacan people traded this precious material to Powhatan, who carefully controlled its distribution among his people.

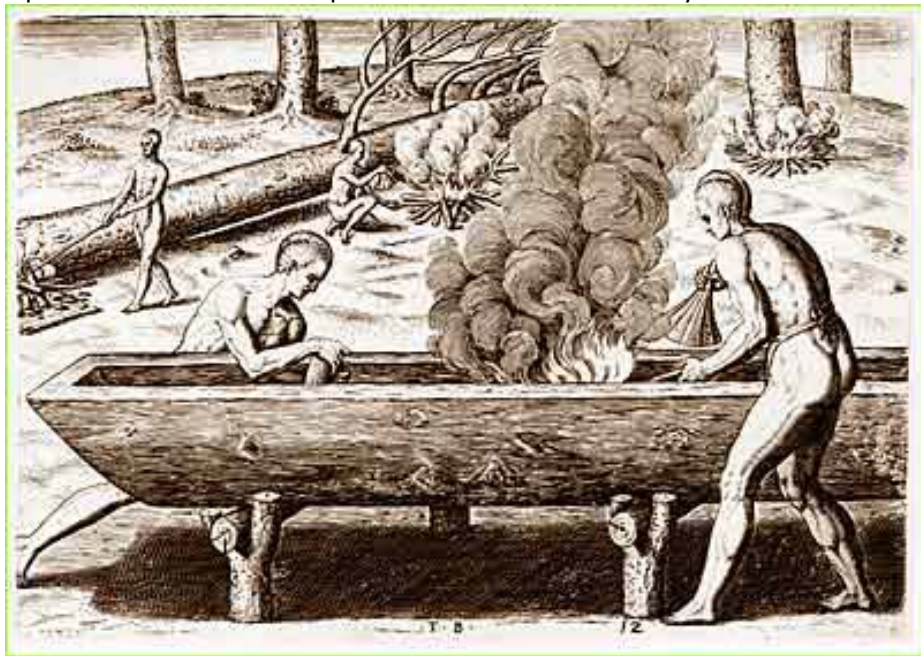


SOL: 2.4, VS 2(e)

# Transportation

Walking was the main mode of transportation for the Eastern Woodlands Indians. However, the dugout canoe was used extensively for fishing and traversing the rivers of what is now Virginia. Archaeologists have unearthed several that were made of cypress. The sizes varied from two- to three- passenger vessels up those capable of transporting thirty to forty people. The largest of these canoes were used by warriors and hunting parties.

Due to the extensive work required to create a dugout canoe, they were the most costly item that the Indian people created. The construction of a dugout canoe began with the felling of a large tree, using fire and stone tools. After removing the bark, carefully controlled fires were used to burn down to the desired depth. Water was used to keep the fire in the desired location. After the fire had burned as much as possible without destroying the desired shape, shells and stone tools were used to scrape the canoe. The entire process took ten to twelve days.



**Tuck the Turtle wants to know.....**

**When making a dugout, what did the Indians use to hollow out the log?**

- A. Water      B. Fire      C. Stone tools      D. All of the above**

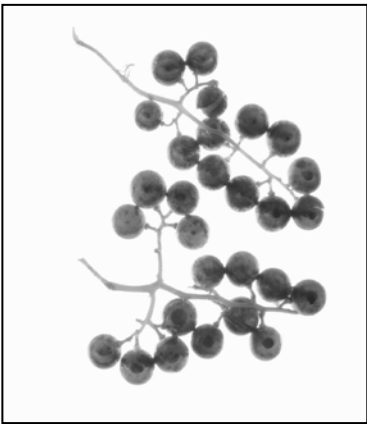
**Answer: D**

*SOL: 2.2, VS 2(e)*

# Gathering

Anthropologists have called the Piedmont area of Virginia the “supermarket” of the Native world, because such diversity of edible

plants could be found in the meadows, marshes, forests, and fallow fields. Not only did these wild plants provide variety, but because the corn harvest did not always last until the next season, the Indians depended on naturally growing foods. According to early colonists, the Powhatan could only store enough corn, beans, and squash to last for about half of the year. The most difficult time was late spring and early summer, before the fields yielded crops and before the berries, nuts, and grapes had ripened. Native women were expert horticulturists, identifying and gathering dozens of species of plants, berries, nuts and roots that would feed their families in those lean months and spreading the seeds of those plants for subsequent seasons.



Summertime brought a wealth of delicacies. Grapes, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries and blueberries grew abundantly in Virginia, thriving in exhausted corn fields and along sunny paths. Red mulberry and persimmon trees were so valued for their fruit that sometimes the Native people would build their homes near the trees. Because the mulberries ripened about the same time as the corn and beans, the women would boil them all together in a stew. Wild onions, native garlic (ramps) and other greens were also used for seasoning.

In the fall, Indians would gather nuts such as acorn, walnut (bitter pecan), hickory, chinquapin and chestnut. The job of using a mortar and pestle to crack open the nuts often fell to the children. White oak acorns were popular for their nutritional value. Nut meats were often processed to make oil, flour and a type of milk. “Walnut milk” was highly prized as a delicacy. Even the shells were used – boiling them to remove tannin to tan leather and to produce dyes.

Flour was made from an assortment of seeds, roots, and grain. Corn flour was abundant throughout the winter, but when it was not available, the seeds of wild grasses or the rhizomes (root system) of the tuckahoe plant were also used.

**According to English accounts, *mattoume* -- a Powhatan bread made from wild grass seeds-- was best when buttered with deer fat.**

SOL: 2.2, VS 2(e)

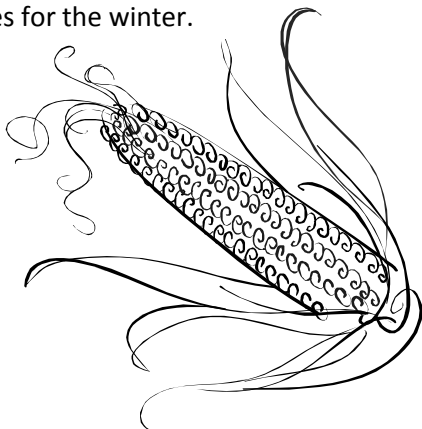
# Farming

Farming was accomplished without the use of a plow, animals, or iron tools. Clearing land to plant corn, beans and squash was time consuming, back-breaking work shared by men and women. New fields had to be prepared while maintaining the crops on the nearly exhausted land. Trees had to be felled without an iron ax or hatchet. To speed up the process, the Indians used a technique called *slash and burn*. This ingenious method of cutting away the bark at the base of tree and building a small fire around it allowed them to take down even the largest trees. In the final step, the entire field was burned in a controlled bonfire. The next year, stumps were uprooted and seeds planted in the soft soil. Indian fields appeared untidy to Europeans, who planted their crops in rows and weeded their fields.

After the fields were cleared, the women planted. The planting season began in April and ran into June, with new plantings each month. Digging sticks were used to make holes into which the corn and bean seeds were planted. Later in the season, squash, gourds and muskmelons were planted between the hills of corn and beans. Corn, beans and squash came to be known as *The Three Sisters*, as they work together in the garden. The corn seeds emerge first, creating a tall stalk around which the beans can vine. The beans supply essential nitrogen for corn. The squash plants provide shade on the ground around the base of the corn and beans, preventing the loss of moisture and prohibiting the growth of weeds.

Children helped in the fields. Digging, planting, watering, and weeding were among their chores, however, perhaps the most important task was to protect the crops. Early drawings and prints made by colonists show children sitting in the fields in small covered scaffolds, acting as live scarecrows. Considering the labor of clearing and planting a field and the importance of the harvest for survival, this job was an important one. Failure to keep animals and birds out of the field could result in the loss of precious food stores for the winter.

SOL: 2.2, VS 2(e)



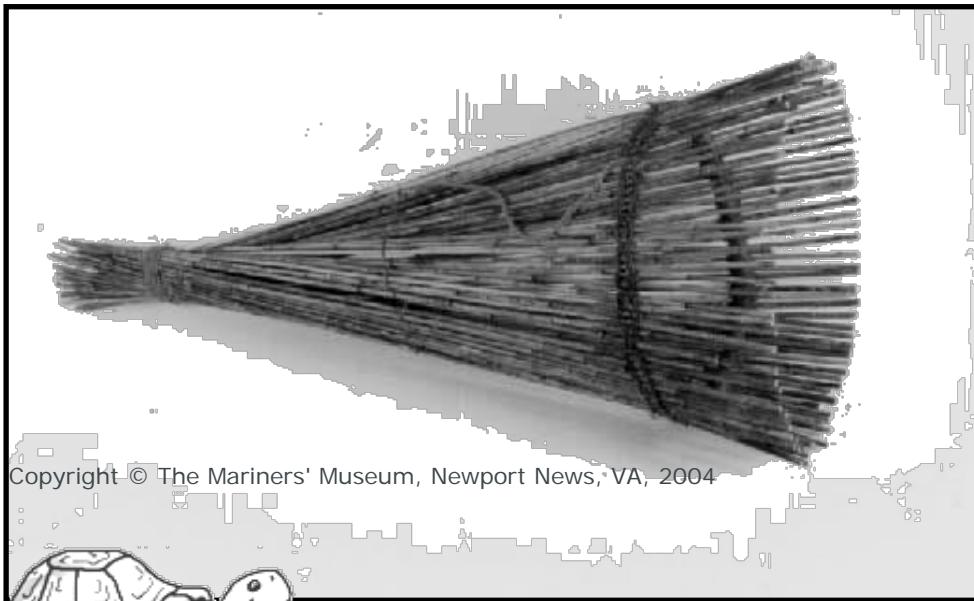


# Fishing

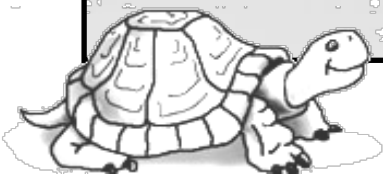
Fish constituted a large portion of the diet among the Powhatan. The men employed a variety of fishing methods including baiting with a pole, line and bone hook, lassoing sturgeon (catching them by the tail), shooting fish with long arrows that were tied to a line and trapping them with fish weirs.

*Fish traps were set by laying stones close together across the river in a "V" shape. The points of the "V" would lead downstream, and were left open. Long wickerwork cones, about three feet wide at the opening and about ten feet long, were then placed inside the "V". The fish would swim in and become trapped by other fish behind them.*

The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, VA



Copyright © The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, VA, 2004



**Tuck the Turtle wants to know.....**

**How does a fish trap work?**

**Answer: A fish trap is a cone-shaped basket that was used to catch fish. It was placed in the river at the point of a V-shaped fence. Large fish would swim into the basket, but they can't get out. Smaller fish would swim through it.**

# Fish Conservation Today

The American shad spends most of its life in the ocean. However, once a year, it returns to fresh water to lay the eggs of the next generation. Before there were state and federal programs to help the fish, the Mattaponi and the Pamunkey tribes were practicing conservation of the shad. During the spring run, the Indians take the roe (eggs) of captured female shad, fertilize and raise them in captivity. When they are old enough, they are introduced back into the river. The shad fingerlings (newly hatched fish) mature and eventually swim downstream to the ocean. Ultimately, the adult fish return to the Mattaponi in order to spawn and begin the process anew. Today, the Mattaponi River is home to thousands of shad, thanks to the efforts of the Virginia Indians.



*"We like to give back. Saving the spawning shad and bringing the eggs back to the hatch is one way to give back and assure the population of shad for the future. You're going to run out of resources unless you replenish. It's going to cause major problems."*

**-Chief Carl "Lone Eagle" Custalow**



## Tuck the Turtle wants to know...

How many miles can a shad swim?

American shad may migrate more than 12,000 miles!  
During an average life span of five years at sea, the

# Pamunkey Pottery: An Unbroken Tradition

Archaeology attests to the fact that the potter's craft has been practiced by Pamunkey Indians and other tribes for many centuries. Pre-Columbian vessels (made before European people came to North America) and shards found on the reservation today are very similar to pieces made at the end of the nineteenth century.

The traditional Pamunkey clay deposit provides a firm link with the past, for this clay deposit has been in documented use for at least 200 years, and it is most likely that clay has been dug here ever since the community was founded. Today, the place is called Lay Landing. According to Mr. Edward Bradby, who was born there at the turn of the century, the original name could have been Clay Landing, the contemporary name being a contracted form. When Pollard interviewed Terrill Bradby at the end of the nineteenth century, he recalled digging clay when he was a boy before the Civil War.

The basic Pamunkey vessel is flat-bottomed. The potter first takes a small quantity of clay and constructs a disk, which forms the bottom. Morsels of clay are then placed on this simple base, and the vessel's walls are formed with the assistance of a mussel shell. Once the desired height is reached, the final shape is given to the vessel. All is accomplished with the hands in concert with a mussel shell. Large vessels are commonly beaten with a cord-wrapped paddle until the walls reach the desired height and thinness. The newly constructed pot is then rubbed with a damp rag, the designs incised or impressed, and the vessel is then allowed to dry slowly. Then the potters turn to the open fire, as was customary with their ancestors and in the tradition as it

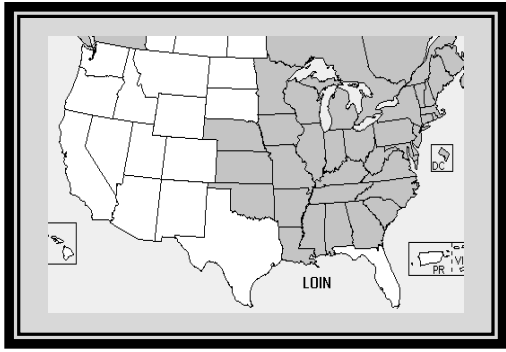
existed before the advent of the Pottery School.

Today, the Pamunkey pottery tradition survives despite the trauma of a changing culture. Over the years, its products have become traditional in their own right.



The traditional Pamunkey clay deposit provides a firm link with the past, for this clay deposit has been in documented use for at least 200 years, and it is most likely that clay has been dug here ever since the community was founded.

*"In former times, the opening of a clay mine was a great feast day with the Pamunkey. The whole tribe, men, women and children were present, and each family took home a share of the clay."*  
-Terrill Bradby

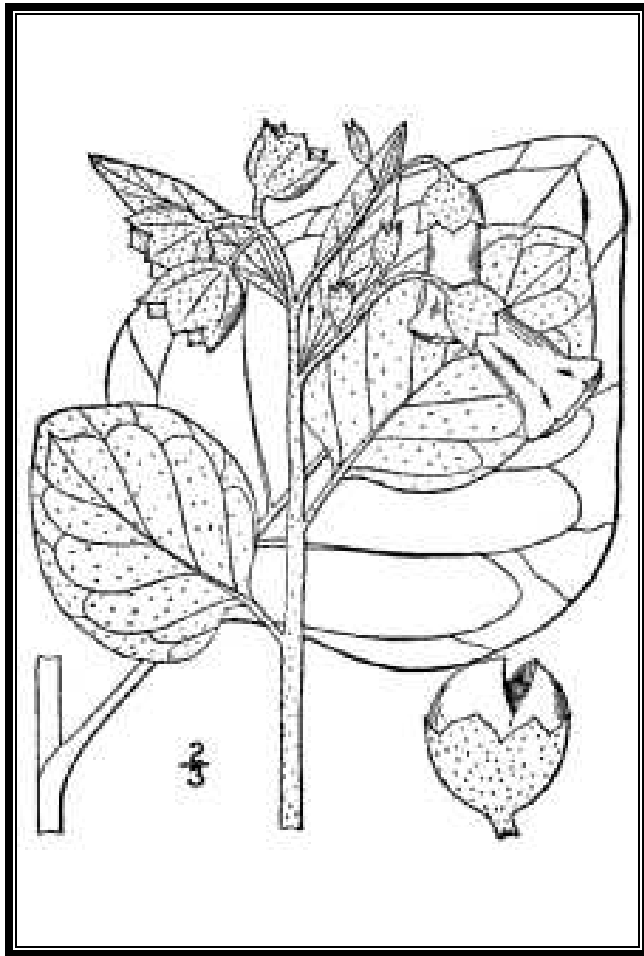


# Native Tobacco

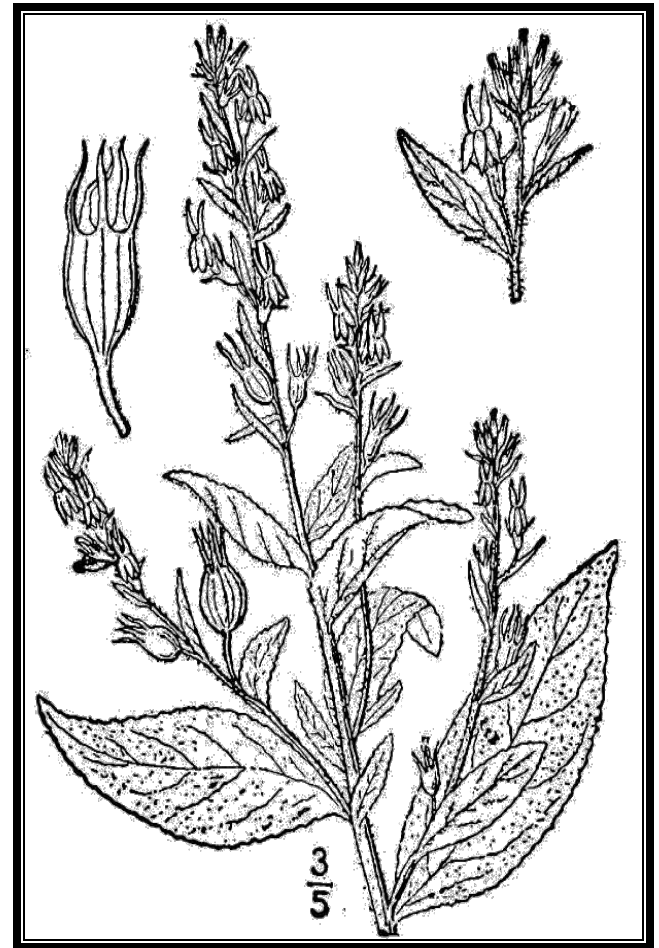
Although the Powhatan women tended the agricultural fields, it is generally believed that the Powhatan men managed the cultivation of tobacco.

Tobacco was traditionally grown by tribes throughout the eastern U.S. and is considered a sacred plant by many Native peoples today. It is used while praying and during ceremonial events. The native plant is not the same species as the one grown commercially today. John Rolfe introduced tobacco plants from the West Indies, which flourished in Virginia's climate. It became such an important cash crop for the colonists that they neglected to plant food along with their tobacco and nearly starved.

Native tobacco, *Nicotiana rustica*, is still grown by many indigenous peoples. Called "Mapacho" in South America, it has a higher nicotine content—up to three times as much—and cannot be smoked habitually. It is used by shamans—medicine men and women—as a psychoactive substance and as a curative.



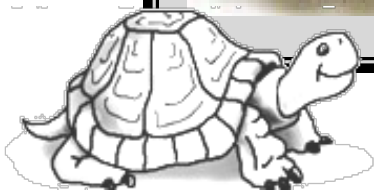
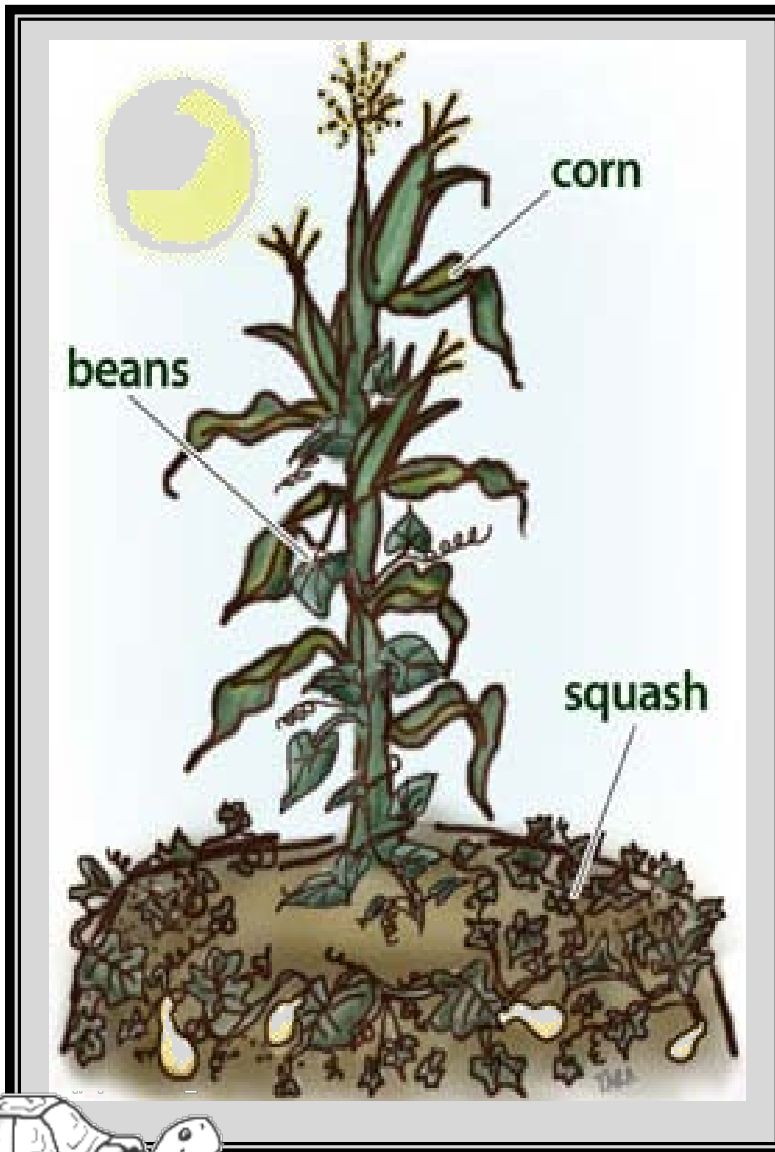
*Nicotiana rustica*



*Nicotiana tabacum*

## The Three Sisters: Corn, Beans, and Squash

By planting three plants in one hill, they work together. The leaves of the squash provide shade, preventing moisture from evaporating and weeds from growing. Beans provide essential nitrogen for corn. The stalks of the corn give the beans a pole around which to climb.



**Tuck the Turtle  
wants to know...**

**What type of toy did the Indians make  
after the fall harvest?**

*The Powhatan, like other Algonquian, used no fertilizer on their fields, and after a few years they would leave some fallow and move on to others. Land was "owned" strictly by usufruct (the person who was farming it at the time). Ultimate ownership remained with the tribe. Since dwellings were made of perishable materials, women found it expedient to build new houses near their new fields. The English eventually used this practice of "abandonment" to their own advantage, while the Powhatan remained woefully uncomprehending of land sales that became "forever."*

--Helen Rountree

Answer: Corn husk dolls



# Tuckahoe

*Tuckahoe grows throughout the eastern U.S. and in a few western states. It was an abundant food source for all of the Eastern Woodland Indians.*

Native people gathered much of their food from marshland and forested areas. Tuckahoe (also known as arrow arum), a plant found in swampy areas, was a staple in their diet, providing starch when corn was not available.

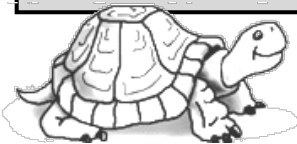
Digging up the starchy rhizome (root) was difficult and time consuming but provided nutrient-rich foods. Tuckahoe and other water-loving plants were so important to the native peoples that ethnohistorian Helen Rountree refers to marshes as “breadbaskets.” From these swampy areas, Indians also harvested the roots of spatterdock, yellow pond lily, and the seeds of other marsh plants such as pickerelweed and wild rice.

Because tuckahoe is rich in toxic oxalic acids, it must be processed before it can be consumed. The women prepared the rhizomes by baking or bleaching them in the sun to release the toxins. Once cured, they could be crushed and pounded into flour for making bread and cakes.

If consumed without removing the toxins, tuckahoe makes the digestive tract feel as though hundreds of needles are being stuck into it.

Recently, small particles of tuckahoe have been discovered on grinding stones at the Maycock's Point Site in Prince George County. According to anthropologist Carole Nash, “The work at Maycock's is very exciting because it gives us evidence of large-scale tuckahoe processing in the Middle Woodland -- ca. 2000 years ago.”

**Fun Fact:** Did you know that some plants have roots, some have bulbs, and others have rhizomes? Roots are thin and look like strings. A bulb is round or tear shaped, like a ball with roots. Rhizomes are long and fat, like the root system of the iris.

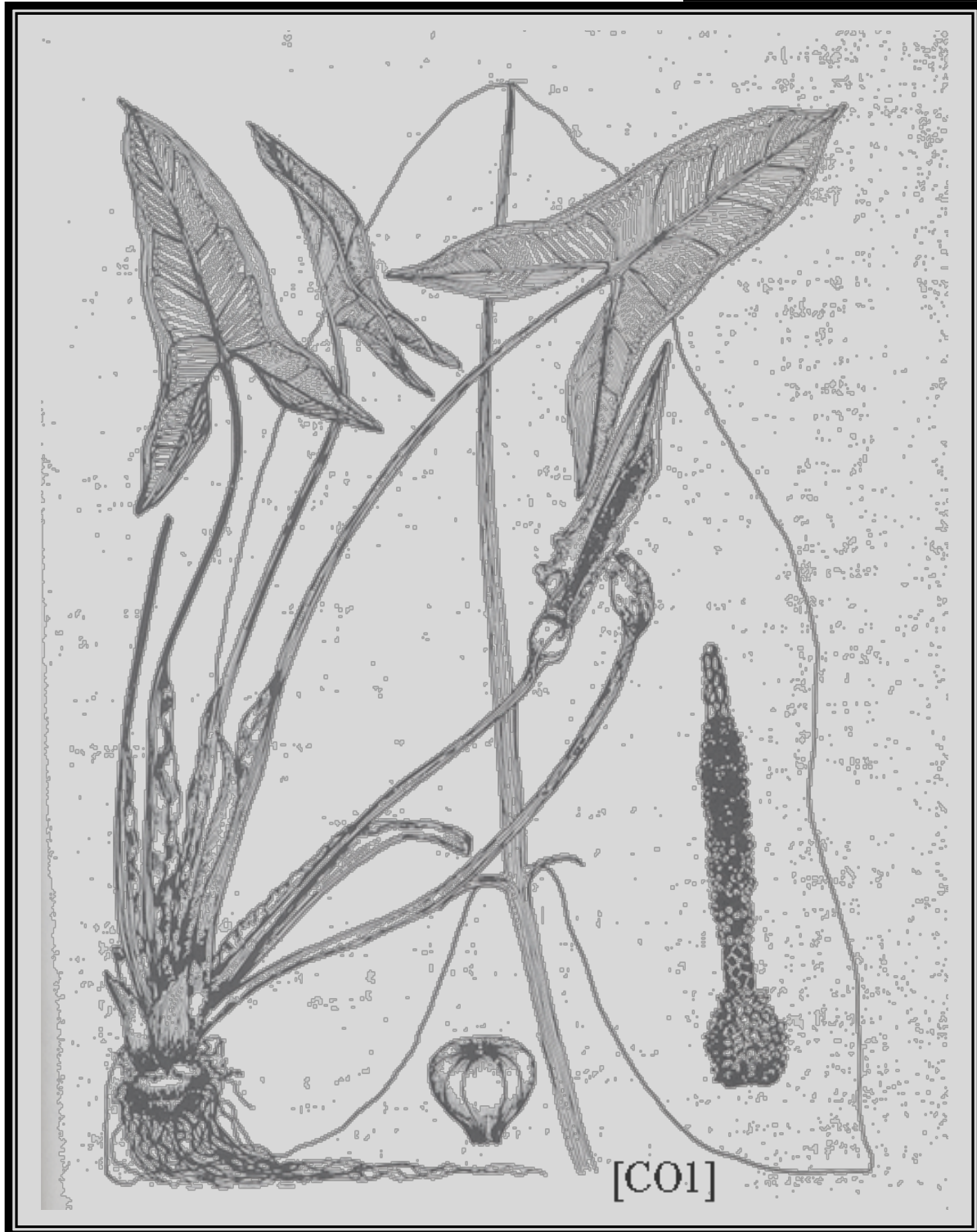
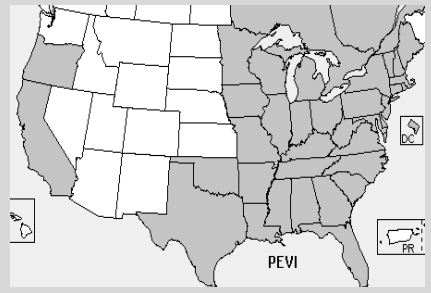


**Tuck the Turtle wants to know.....**  
**How did Indian mothers make bread from tuckahoe?**

Native women would dig the roots of the tuckahoe plant to make bread for their families. Because it grows in swampy areas, they would have to wade into the water to dig up the rhizomes. After drying, they would boil or roast the tuckahoe for several hours. Finally, the rhizomes were ready to grind into flour for bread.

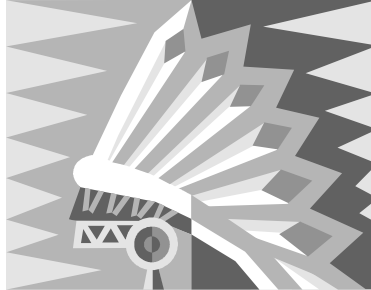
# Tuckahoe

*Peltandra virginica*



# Educational Activities

Did you know that Virginia Indians did not wear “War Bonnets”? These were worn by some Plains Indian tribal leaders, not Eastern Woodland Indians. During the 1900s, leaders of many Indian tribes wore war bonnets, because the American public expected to see them. Today, they wear their tribe’s traditional headdresses.



What type of feather do most Virginia Indian leaders wear for ceremonial occasions? (Hint: NOT the eagle feather)

Answer: Turkey

The kit below is available at [www.tandyleatherfactory.com/home/.../Kits/...Kits/4635-01.aspx](http://www.tandyleatherfactory.com/home/.../Kits/...Kits/4635-01.aspx)

## MEDICINE POUCH KIT

#4635-01

**KIT PARTS:** Kit Parts: Front, Back, Fringe, Lace, Leaf, Beads, Needle & Thread

**ASSEMBLY NOTE:** Pouch is sewn wrong side out and then turned.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

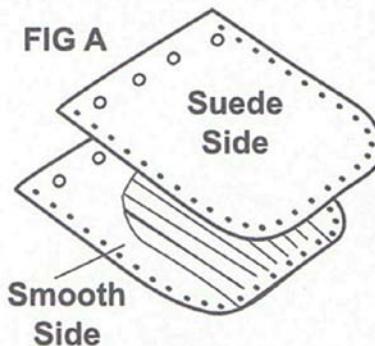
**Step 1.** Center fringe part between front and back parts aligning holes (Fig A).

**Step 2.** Leaving 4" of thread at first hole (Fig B), stitch in and out around pouch through all parts. Pull stitches tight.

**Step 3.** At last hole, turn and stitch back around to first hole. Tie ends in knot (Fig C). Trim thread. Turn pouch smooth side out.

**Step 4.** To make drawstring (Fig D), fold lace in half. Insert ends through hole #1 (on each side). Don't twist lace; keep flat. Lace in and out to other side. On outside of pouch, thread ends together through two holes in leather leaf as shown. Slide a bead on each lace end. Tie ends of lace together in overhand knot.

FIG A



Smooth Side

FIG B

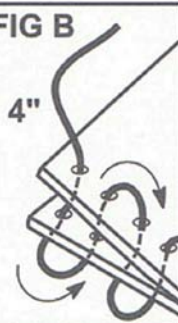
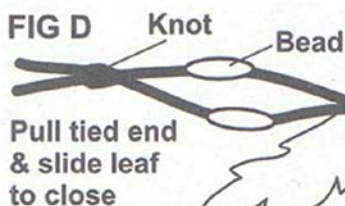


FIG C



FIG D



# Word Find

T I P H N H M M D O I Y S O Y R G H  
 C U M T S A K O N R C N A N A N W A  
 U T D G H A O C O K U I I N I H O N  
 F G S P U L U Q O U I M A R T C W N  
 U Y C N N G U Q K N O O E O M N W G  
 Y R E T T O P A S H N H B H P E O I  
 C T N K I N O P A T T A M R E P P U  
 S M U A N Q A K O A C K H O S I S H  
 P O N C G U C U G C S C I A E N A G  
 D N I M K I M N O S A I E A P O S N  
 C A K O H A P A F I S H T R A P S I  
 C C S C O N H O P O S C O C R A A M  
 C A K T P D N O M E S N A N G T F R  
 M N C C U C B S E I R R E B T T R A  
 T O U L O N G H O U S E C I N A A F  
 E E B P I R P O W H A T A N G M S H  
 H T P R O P N T R F I S H I N G C A  
 B E A N S P W C G E N A B G O D T A  
 R A E S S D A E B L L E H S O R I A

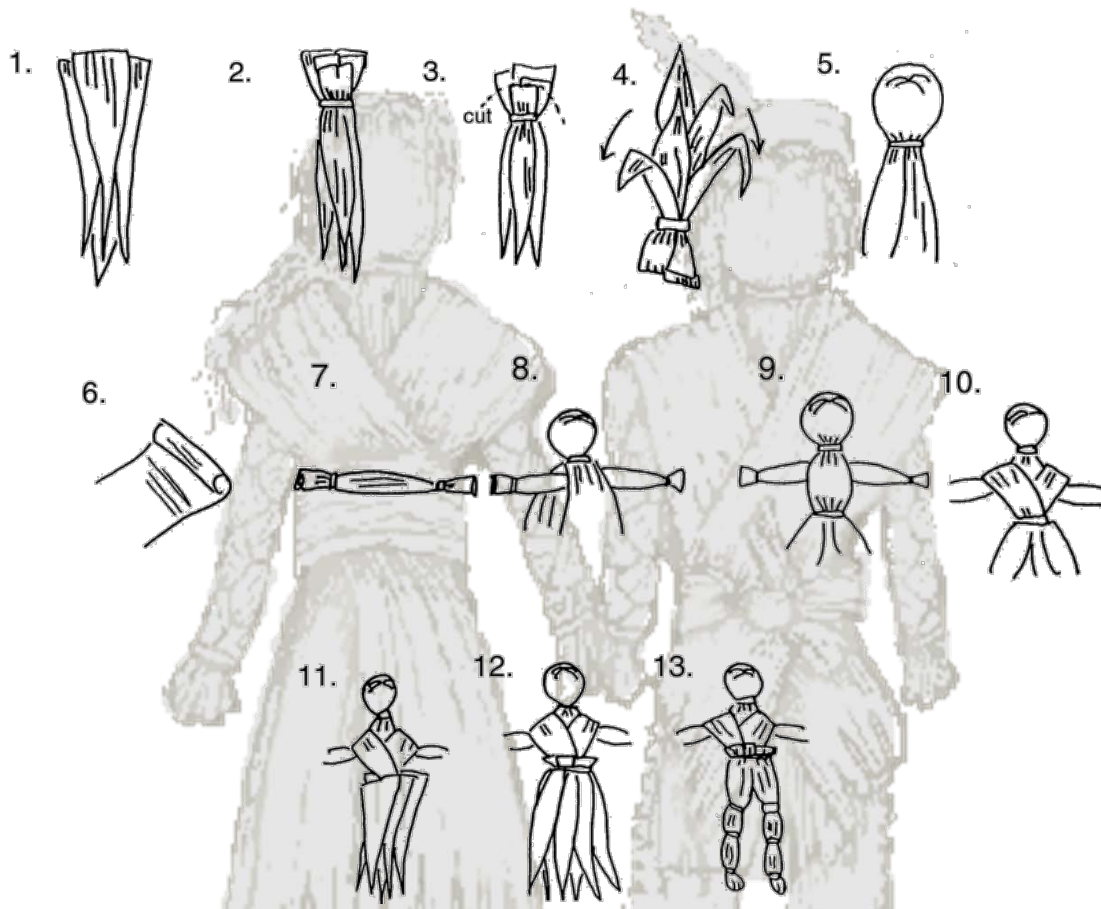
Algonquian	beans	berries
buckskin	canoe	Chickahominy
copper	corn	dogbane
drum	Eastern Chickahominy	farming
fish trap	fishing	gathering
grapes	hunting	Iroquoian
longhouse	Mattaponi	Monacan
Nansemond	nuts	Pamunkey
Pocahontas	pottery	Powhatan
powwow	Rappahannock	sassafras
shell beads	Siouan	squash
tobacco	tuckahoe	Upper Mattaponi

See if you can find these words, backwards or forwards, in the puzzle above.

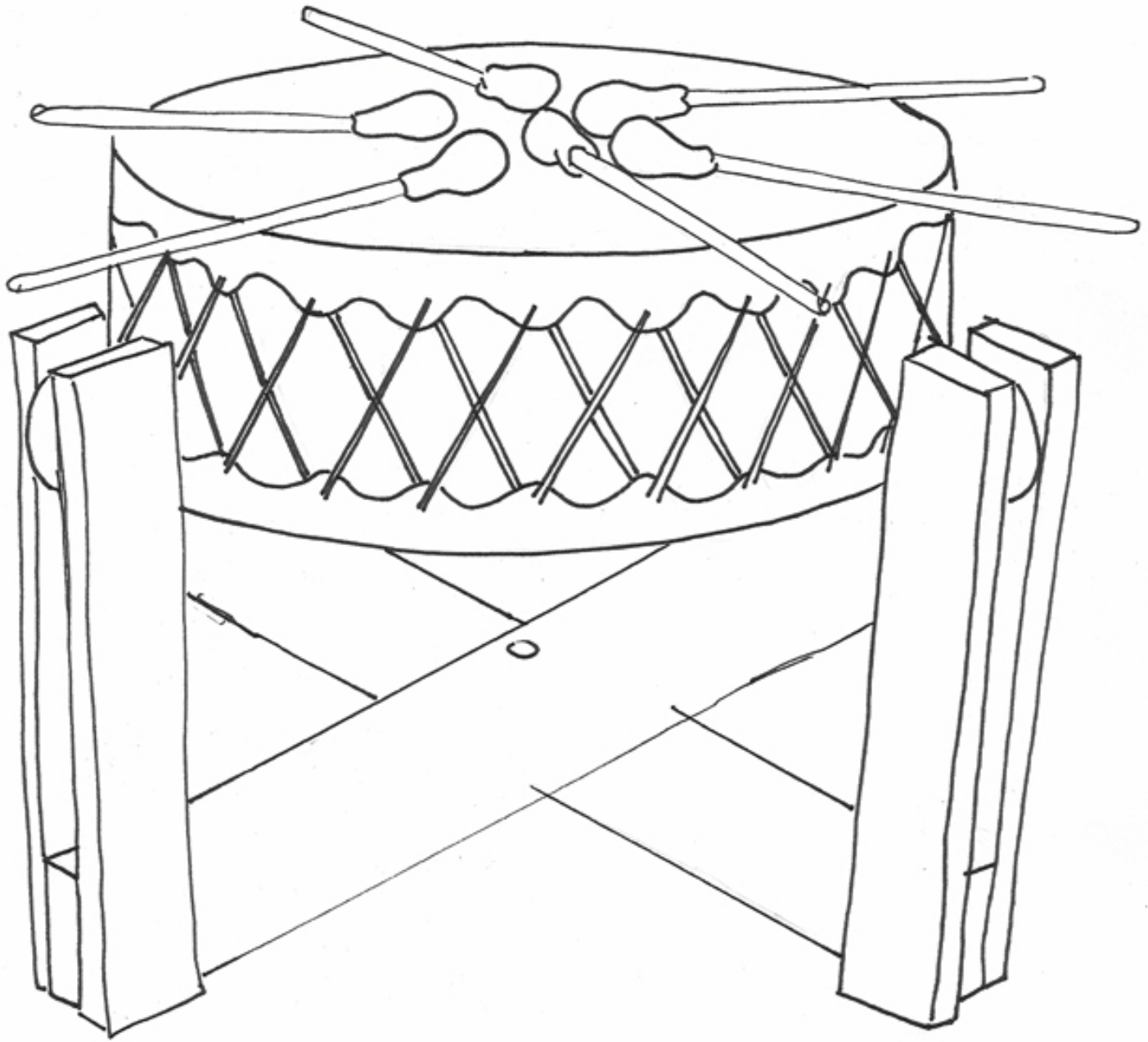
# Corn Husk Dolls

*(Note: corn husks are available in bulk at Latino grocery stores, where they are sold as tamale wraps)*

1. Place four or five pre-soaked cornhusks on top of one another.
2. Tie the straight ends together tightly.
3. Trim if needed.
4. Turn upside down and pull long ends of husks down over the trimmed edges.
5. Tie with string to form the "head."
6. Take another husk, flatten it, and roll into a tight cylinder. This piece, which becomes the arms, may also be created by braiding three thin pieces of husk.
7. Tie each end with string.
8. Fit the arms inside of the long husks, just below the "neck."
9. Tie with string, as shown, to form a "waist."
10. Drape a husk around the arms and upper body in a criss-cross pattern to form "shoulders."
11. To make a skirt, use four or five husks, straight edges together, and arrange around waist.
12. Tie with string.
13. If you want to make legs, tie legs with small strips of husks or string.







*Moria Oden (Monacan)*

**The drum is a very important part of powwow dancing for many tribes. Often, Native people refer to the drumbeat as “the heartbeat of mother earth.”**

Each man uses one drumstick. How many men are playing this drum?



*Moria Oden (Monacan)*

### **Did you know that mothers helped to train young boys to hunt?**

Before breakfast, moms would toss a piece of moss or some other target into the air. The boy had to hit the target with his bow and arrow. After he was successful, he would be allowed to eat.



*Moria Oden (Monacan)*

**In earlier times, Indian grandmothers took care of the babies while mothers were doing other chores.**

**This was an important job, because the young women needed to raise the crops and gather berries and nuts.**

**Today, Indian grandmas still help to raise children.**

**This is Bertie Branham, a Monacan grandma and basket maker, with her granddaughter.**

## Fast Facts

- Native peoples have lived in what is now called Virginia for as many as 18,000 years. The Cactus Hill archaeological site is among the oldest in our nation.
- The population of Native peoples in 1607, in what is now Virginia, may have been as high as 50,000. Up to 90 percent of some indigenous peoples died from European diseases—not warfare—after 1492.
- Native peoples do not think of the Western hemisphere as a “New World.”
- Because American Indians were not Christian, European peoples felt justified in claiming the lands they occupied. They believed God had ordained them to possess such territories throughout the world.
- However, Virginia was not founded by English colonists for “religious freedom.” The Virginia Company was primarily an economic enterprise, with corporate investors.
- Powhatan was the paramount chief, the *mamanatowick* (spiritual leader) of 32 tribes in 1607. He believed in God. His people’s name for God was *Ahone*.
- Powhatan’s daughter, Pocahontas, was about 10 years old when the English arrived. Scholars argue whether or not the legendary “rescue of John Smith” actually happened. If it did, it was most likely a Native ritual misunderstood by Smith. Pocahontas was a child. She did not fall in love with John Smith. She was not an heir to Powhatan’s leadership; thus, she was not a “princess.”
- Once the English colonists established dominion over Powhatan lands, they passed laws permitting Indian people to be killed for various reasons. “Friendly” Indians were required to wear silver “badges” issued by the Virginia Governor, symbolizing their allegiance to the colony.
- The Treaties of 1646 and 1677 between the King of England and the Virginia Indian tribes established terms of peace. Two tribes, the Pamunkey and the Mattaponi, have continued to observe the tribute required by those treaties. Every year, on the day before Thanksgiving, they present a tribute of fish and game to the Governor.
- Virginia first passed “race laws” in 1705. These laws described Virginia Indians and other peoples of color and regulated their activities. Additional laws were passed during the 1800s. The Racial Integrity Act of 1924 declared that marriage between people of color and people determined to be white was illegal, and those who violated the law could be sent to prison.
- Walter Plecker, head of the division of vital statistics in Virginia for more than 30 years, was a staunch eugenicist and white supremacist. He changed many Indian people’s birth certificates, without any evidence, from “Indian” to “colored.”
- Virginia Indians students were not permitted to attend public schools until 1963. Mission schools, located near tribal populations, provided education up to seventh grade. For some tribes, high school education was not available at all. For others, the only option was to send their children to schools operated by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, located as far away as Oklahoma. Children who had never left their home counties were given \$200 and a train ticket. They were not able to return home until the school year ended.
- Eight Virginia tribes were recognized by the state of Virginia between 1983 and 1989. Although more than 560 tribes are recognized by the federal government today, the Virginia tribes are not. Six of the eight Virginia tribes have submitted a bill to the U.S. Congress requesting federal acknowledgment of their sovereign status. Their motto: “First to welcome, last to be recognized.”

# Virginia Indian Resources

## **Virginia Indian Heritage Program**

Virginia Foundation for the Humanities

145 Ednam Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22903

(434) 924-3296, [www.virginiafoundation.org](http://www.virginiafoundation.org)

*Traveling exhibits, public programs, Teacher Institutes, publications, educational resources, historical research, online calendar of Virginia Indian public events. See [www.virginiaindianprogram.org](http://www.virginiaindianprogram.org)*

## **Virginia Council on Indians**

P.O. Box 1475, Richmond, VA 23218

(804) 225-2084

*A state advisory council to the Governor and legislature on issues of concern to Virginia Indians and for educational advocacy. See [www.indians.vipnet.org](http://www.indians.vipnet.org)*

## **United Indians of Virginia**

Kenneth F. Adams, Chair, 1236 Mount Pleasant Rd., King William, VA 23086

(804) 769-3378

*A nonprofit organization dedicated to education and economic opportunity for Virginia tribes.*

## **Mattaponi-Pamunkey-Monacan, Inc.**

Anne Richardson, Director (804) 769-4767, [www.mpmjobs.org](http://www.mpmjobs.org)

*A job training and education consortium for Virginia tribal members.*

## **Virginia Indian Tribal Alliance for Life (VITAL)**

Wayne Adkins, President, 8836 Sedburg Dr., New Kent, VA 23124

(804) 932-4406, [www.vitalva.org](http://www.vitalva.org)

*A 501(c)4 advocacy organization for federal recognition efforts.*

## **Chickahominy Tribal Dancers**

Wayne Adkins, Coordinator, 8836 Sedburg Dr., New Kent, VA 23124

(804) 932-4406

*A tribal dance troupe specializing in Virginia Indian dances.*

## **Rappahannock American Indian Dancers**

Judith Fortune, Coordinator, Box 542, Tappahannock, VA 22560

(804) 769-0260

*A tribal dance troupe specializing in Virginia Indian dances.*



# Suggested Readings

Cook, Samuel B. 2000. *Monacans and Miners: Native American and Coal Mining Communities in Appalachia*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Egloff, Keith, and Deborah Woodward. 2006. *First People: The Early Indians of Virginia*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Feest, Christian F. 1990. "The Powhatan Indians." In *Indians of North America*, Frank W. Porter, III, ed. New York: Chelsea House Publishers (classic secondary source).

Gleach, Frederic W. 1997. *Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press (chapter 1 especially recommended).

Haile, Edward W. 1998. *Jamestown Narratives: Eyewitness Accounts of the Virginia Colony: The First Decade 1607-1617*. Champlain, VA: RoundHouse (primary source material).

Hantman, Jeffrey L. 1990. "Between Powhatan and Quirank: Reconstructing Monacan Culture and History in the Context of Jamestown." *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 92, No. 3 (Sept.), 676-690.

Hantman, Jeffrey L. and Gary Dunham. 1993. "The Enlightened Archaeologist." *Archaeology*, May/June.

Moretti-Langholtz, Danielle. 2003. *In Their Own Words: Voices of Virginia Indians*. Interactive Multimedia CD, American Indian Resource Center. Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary.

Rountree, Helen C. 1990. *Pocahontas's People: The Powhatan Indians of Virginia through Four Centuries*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press (classic secondary source).

2005. *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Indian Lives Changed by Jamestown*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Townsend, Camilla. 2004. *Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Wood, Karenne (ed.). 2009. *The Virginia Indian Heritage Trail*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Charlottesville: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

Wood, Karenne and Diane Shields. 2000. *The Monacan Indians: Our Story*. Madison Heights, VA: Monacan Indian Nation.



# A Guide to Writing about Virginia Indians and Virginia Indian History

## **Virginia Council on Indians**

P.O. Box 1475, Richmond, VA

(804) 225-2084

In the spirit of mutual benefit for writers and the Virginia Indian communities, the Virginia Council on Indians offers the following helpful suggestions:

1. Take care when using the phrase American Indian, Native American or Virginia Indian "culture." There were numerous Indian cultures in Virginia, and hundreds in North America. Unless you are referring to only one tribe, this word should be plural.
2. Avoid using plurals of names of nations when referring to our people as a group, as in "The Chickahominies shared a reservation with the Mattaponis in the 17th century." When referring to a tribe as a group by their tribal name, the name should be singular and the verb form plural: "The Monacan were recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1989."
3. If possible, seek opportunities to mention American Indians who lived in Virginia before the Europeans arrived, and to show the continuity of our existence here through time into the present. The use of words such as "extinct" or "disappeared" in referring to tribes gives the reader the impression that there are no descendants today. Similarly, the use of "discovery" for a European group's first exploration of Native territory implies that the Natives' use of the land and water was unimportant.
4. When writing of modern events, try to avoid referring to Indian songs as "chants" and to Indian powwow drums with overly dramatic adjectives such as "throbbing." Use the term "regalia" rather than "costumes" for American Indian clothing worn for powwows or ceremonial events.
5. Use discretion when using the word "village" to describe any historic Indian community. Even the 17th century English usually called our communities "towns", as distinguished from temporary "camps" used in seasonal visits for hunting, fishing, and harvesting oysters or various plants for food, medicine and life functions. Terms like "village" and "hamlet" consistently applied to Native American communities imply that our towns were primitive or quaint.
6. Use caution when describing elements of Native cultures in terms that simplify or marginalize, such as "gardening" for "agriculture," "myths" or "legends" for "history," or "woodlands survival skills" or "lore" for "science." Similarly, words referring to historic conflicts or intercultural interactions may unintentionally connote values, such as describing tribes as "friendly" or "hostile" according to how the Indians reacted to incursions by Europeans.
7. Avoid referring to the paramount chief Powhatan as "Chief Powhatan" as if he were an ordinary chief, or by his informal name Wahunsunacock, when writing about him as a leader. It is appropriate to refer to him as Powhatan, the name (and name of hometown) that he took when he became paramount chief, before the English came to Virginia. This is what other Indian nations called him. The English terms "king", "emperor" and "ruler" are also inappropriate, as they are imperfect English translations used by the colonists who did not understand the nature of his political organization.

8. Powhatan's tributaries (the tribes that paid tribute to him) are best referred to as a "paramount chiefdom" or "paramountcy" or by using generic terms such as "the Powhatan tribes", when referring to these tribes at the time of English contact. They did not constitute a "chiefdom", a "confederacy" or a "nation." They were not sub-tribes, but individual nations that paid tribute to the same paramount chief. The only "Powhatan nation" was the tribe located to the east of Richmond on the James River, where the paramount chief came from originally. Because not all of the Virginia Algonquian tribes were tributaries to Powhatan, please avoid referring to all Virginia Algonquian tribes collectively as "Powhatan Indians."

9. Virginia Algonquian cultures (indeed, most North American Indian cultures) were matrilineal. A child's status (such as being eligible for leadership) was determined by the mother's status, not by the father. Powhatan's high status wives were known to the English colonists by name, but the mother of Pocahontas was never identified. Therefore avoid referring to Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas, as a "princess."

10. Use caution when referring to Pocahontas, her age (she was born in 1597), and the events of her life. It is important to note that opinions differ strongly on the alleged "rescue" incident at Werowocomoco in 1607. Some think it happened much as Smith described it in his 1624 writings, although he did not mention the incident at all in his earlier writing of his time at Werowocomoco. Others think it never happened, and still others believe the event occurred, but was an "adoption" ritual that was misunderstood by Smith. Many Virginia Indians believe that her role as a child was overemphasized by the English, and that historians frequently overlook or misinterpret her adult actions.

11. Take caution to prevent misinformation about Virginia Indian history, such as incorrect population estimates, referring to the Virginia Algonquians as "Algonquins", or to the Siouan speaking tribes of the piedmont as "Sioux", misspelling the names of tribes, the misrepresentation of events, and using inappropriate language, such as describing periods of intensified English/Indian conflict as "wars."

12. Avoid using only non-Indian "experts" as sources of information about Virginia Indians, whether historical or contemporary. This often results in errors in both historical and modern information, and in the use of inappropriate words, as shown in some of the examples above.

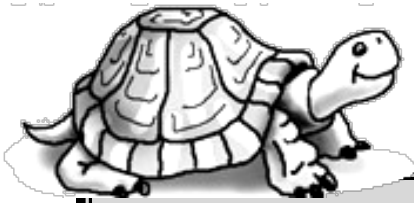
Please check the facts and use multiple, reliable sources. The Virginia Council on Indians office can supply background information, suggestions for resource material, and contact information for both Native and non-Native scholars who work with the tribes. It can also supply contact information for the tribes and referrals to the appropriate tribal leaders and scholars among the Virginia Indians as sources for interviews and quotes.



## Credits

Chief Stephen Adkins (Chickahominy)  
Ashley Atkins (Pamunkey)  
1590 Theodore De Bry engravings of Algonquian Indian men  
Chickahominy Indians, Eastern Division  
Maps by Keith Damiani, Sequoia Design  
<http://www.geneticmaize.com/> (image of three sisters)  
The Library of Virginia  
The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, VA (fishing)  
Mattaponi Fish Hatchery and Marine Science Center  
Mattaponi Indian Reservation  
Monacan Indian Nation  
Nansemond Indian Tribal Association  
New York State Museum (image of longhouse)  
Carole Nash, personal communications  
Moria Oden (Monacan)  
Powhatan Red Cloud-Owen (Mohawk /Chickahominy)  
Pamunkey Indian Museum  
Pamunkey Indian Tribe  
Simon Van De Passe, 1616, *Pocahontas*, National Portrait Gallery  
Rappahannock Tribe  
Helen Rountree, personal communications (tuckahoe)  
(A portion of the information in this booklet was derived from the research of Helen Rountree)  
Teachersfirst.com (cornhusk doll instructions)  
Tandy Leather (pouch instructions)  
Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe  
United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services: Plants Database  
University of Oklahoma: biosurvey images (tuckahoe)  
Virginia Council on Indians, <http://indians.vipnet.org/resources.cfm>  
Virginia Museum of Natural History



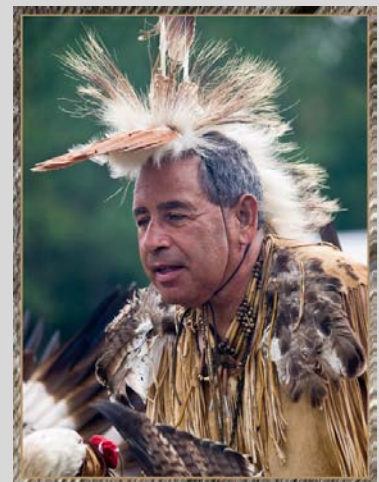
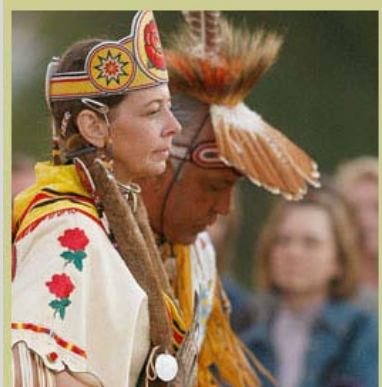


## Tuck the Turtle wants to know....

What is the difference between a **COSTUME** and **REGALIA**?

A **costume** is an outfit that you wear when you want to pretend to be something that you are not. If you dress up as a pirate for a costume party, when you take off your eye-patch, you are not really still a pirate.

**Regalia** is the special American Indian clothing worn for powwows or ceremonial events. When an Indian removes his regalia at the end of a powwow, he is still an Indian. Many hours are spent sewing, beading, and perfecting these outfits. Some of the items are considered sacred. It is not polite to touch any part of the regalia without first asking the person who is wearing it.





# What is the difference between history and legend?

John Smith wrote that Pocahontas had saved his life, but he reported it 20 years after it supposedly happened. Everyone else in the story had died by then, and it remains unverified. He also claimed to have been saved by exotic young women at least two other times in his life. Scholars today believe that his account is either fictitious or that Smith misunderstood a Powhatan ritual. Now the story has become an American legend, part of our popular culture.



**Tuck the Turtle wants to know:**

**What's wrong with this picture?**

There are at least eight problems with this picture. See how many you can find!

**Possible Answers:**

- (1) Rocky Mountains in background instead of Coastal Plain
- (2) Teepees in background instead of longhouses
- (3) Pocahontas doesn't look like a ten-year-old
- (4) Powhatan's arms look like he has a disease

- (5) Headresses from tropical birds, not turkeys
- (6) Virginia Natives did not weave or dye clothes
- (7) Men's hair should be shaved on one side
- (8) Earrings should be shell or copper, not gold

